Kkk. 649

A CALL to SCOTLAND

For Threatning

FAMINE

Or a DISCOURSE shewing

I. That not only SCOTLAND, but the whole Isle of BRITAIN, are in as dangerous a state, and as liable, (by reason of the grosness of their Sins) to the dreadful judgements of GOD, as ever the *Old World*, *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*, or any other Nation were.

And II. that unless we timeously Repent, we can expect nothing but to be cut off from being any more a People, like the Obstinat Stiffnecked *Jews*, and scattered as Vagabounds thorow the Earth.

Lamentations. 3. 40 *Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.*

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2. Samuel 24 Chap. *and* 13 V.

So Gad *came unto* David, *and told him, and said unto him, shall seven Years of Famine come unto thee in the Land? Or wilt thou flee three Months before thine Enemies while they pursue thee? Or that there be three days Pestilence in thy Land? Now advise, and see what Answer I shall return unto him that sent me.*

FAmine, Sword, and Pestilence, are the three last and dreadful Judgments that the All-wise Governour of the World, uses to inflict upon a Stubborn and stiffnecked People; especially such as have made a Trade of sinning against the clearest light of eternal Truth, and greatest Manifestations of Divine Mercy And before we come to the words, we are to observe; *First*, That we cannot find in the course of Providence that ever the power of God did exert it self in such severe Acts of Justice, till a people (by their obstinacy) had proved that all the gentle proceedings of Love were too faint Means for their Recovery. *Secondly*, We are to observe, that a Nation highly obliged by signal Favours from above, was never permitted to run on in their course of Defection, without

some severe scourge sent from the avenging hand of Heaven to reduce them to their right Wits again: This might be examplified by infinite Passages of Sacred and profane History, had we either time to receive them, or ye patience to hear them. But why should we multiply words in a matter so plain to every Mans experience? Was not this the fate of the Old World, who, for their Debauchries and Idolatrys (contrary to the sound Instructions, committed to them by their pious and long liv'd Ancestours, in whose Memory the Creation of the World and mighty things of God were yet fresh by infallible Tradition from Father to Son) did perish, eight persons excepted, by an universal deluge of Water, to the terror of Succeeding Ages from following their Foot-steps? Was not this the just consequence of the notorious Villany of *Sodom* and *Gommorah*, and the Plains all a round, in being burnt alive with Fire from Heaven to the horrour of all, who either hear the Story, or see the frightfull ruines of once so pleasant and delightfull dwellings, what Snares? What Calamities did fall upon the *Jews*, God's peculiar People and chosen Flock, for their frequent Rebellions against Heaven, and contempt of the Priviledges bestow'd on them above all Nations of the spacious World, and now at last after their Incredulity and hardness of Heart, how do we see them scattered thorow all Nations, as the mockrie of Mankind and off-scourings of the Earth. And if this be done to the Nation beloved of *God*, to the Children of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, with whom their was an eternal Covenant made, that their Children should be chastised with stripes, but his loving kindness should never depart from them; how can any other people expect to evade his just Vengeance, who declares that he is a consuming fire to the workers of Iniquity. *Thirdly*, We are to observe from the words, that after a peoples Cup is full, the Lord powers out his wrath upon causes that in appearance are, but small; the people of *Israel* here had been blessed from the foundation of their State with very singular Mercys, and lately had their Government committed to a *Man* after God's own Heart, yet they did not behave themselves so before God as became a people upon whom such uncommon blessings were bestowed; for in the beginning of this Chapter, it is said, That again the anger of the Lord was kindled against *Israel*, and he moved *David* against them, to say, go number *Israel* and *Judah*. Its true we cannot enter upon the discussing of

all the Difficulties that might be raised from the words, but its evident from the practice of the Jews throw all Ages, that they were a people very insensible of their Mercys, & that now when God had given them extraordinary favours, they made no proportional amends, He designs to send a lash among them, to bring them to a better understanding. So that this truth is plain that no people to whom God has displayed the bright beams of his Truth, can escape punishment if they continue in a course of Sin, and much less if they grow worse and worse under their Mercies. As we may see (without more proofs) from the last words of *Joshua*, *Jos.* 23. *Ch.* 15 and 16 "Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon "you which the Lord your God promised you: So shall the Lord "bring upon you all evil things, until he hath destroyed you off "this good Land which the Lord your God hath given you, when "ye have transgressed the Covenant of the Lord your God, which "He hath commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, "and bowed your selves unto them: Then shall the anger of the "Lord be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off "the good land which he hath given unto you. Finally, We are to observe that all the mighty Empires of the World, waxing bold in iniquity, according to the enlargement of their Conquests, have been crush'd and brought to nothing by Almighty power; which are clear Arguments for the proving of our assertion. But that we may come to an Application of this manifest Truth, to the circumstances of great *Britain* and of *Scotland* in particular, we must consider: *First*, What the troubles are we groan under, "*Secondly*, What are the procuring Causes thereof, and what we are to fear, if we continue in the present stupidity of Heart. And *Thirdly*, What we are to do in way of Duty to escape the Judgements hanging above our head. As to the first of these, we are to consider three things. *First*, That tho God has not sent the Sword among us, yet it is not long since our lives lay at the stake and were ready to be sacrificed to the bloody thirst of cruel men so that with *Israel* we may say *Ps.* 124. and 2. v. "If it "had not been the Lord who was on our side, when Men rose up a "gainst us, they had swallowed us up quick when their wrath "was kindled against us v. 7. But our Soul is escap'd as a Bird out "of the snare of the Fowlers, The snare is broken and we are es-"caped. *Secondly*, The pestilence has not been sent among us,

but

but that which is very near it, raging sicknesses have abounded to the cutting off of Thousands in the flower of their Age; what malignant Fevers? what bloody Fluxes, what epidemical decayes and unaccountable diseases have not for these few years by past vasted our Lands? So that families have gone to the grave together, and whole shires have been stupified at the vast mortality. *Thirdly*, Neither has Famine come to a height; yet for several Years we have been threatned with increaseing Dearth, that is likely to end in Famine, if the Lord put not a stop to it. And now I am certain all that hears this are sensible of what I say, what numbers of poor people are starving in City and Countrey for want of food, and even they who have Families above their heads are not able to succour them so much as is the encouragement for labour, & so far is the price of bread raised above the ordinary rate. What complaints hear we every where among all ranks of persons of the hardness of living, scarcity of Money, and want of trade: As to the *Second* point we must observe two things; *First* we are in the very same circumstances with those Nations which God in his justice has cutoff from the face of the Earth for their Enormities; for whereas many Churches about dare not serve God openly for fear of their cruel Oppressors, but are forced to betake themselves to Dens, Mountains and Desarts in the seasons of the night, and that not without the fear of their lives, and danger of their Estates, to hear the word of God; He has bestowed on us a more favourable day of providence in granting the plenty and purity of His Gospel by the established Law of the Kingdom. *Secondly* that whereas he has suffered others to fall under the severest persecutions that ever Christians under went, our Scourges hitherto, compared with theirs are but like the checks of a father in respect of severe chastisements. *Thirdly*. What has been our carriage under these dispensations, but that of a stiffnecked generation that will not be warned of the wrath to come, What have we left unessayed that might provoke Gods just vengeance against us! forgetfulness of God! Unthankfulness! Neglect and Contempt of Ordinances! an universal Corruption of manners! lake of Charity and love towards one another! are but among the least of our Sins and this may serve for the causes of our miseries,

As to the third point, we are to consider, that tho hitherto God has proceeded gently with us, yet he has let us see that His sword is drawn, and he will not sheath it if we continue in the present course

course: for he is a God that will not clear the guilty, but we must expect to receive the outmost strocks of these judgements whereof he has given us the preludes. As to the last point, what we are to do that we may evite these dreadful lashes of Almighty justice, we shall observe these things: *First*, we must resolve to make sincere repentance of our sins in particular, of the sins of the Land, & of the sins of our Fathers, we must humble our selves in dust and ashes, & say, *We with our fathers have sinned*, &c. *Secondly*, we must lay out account to make a personal Covenant with God, to lead our lives according to the plat form of his Law, and to persevere in the Observance of his Ordinances. We must endeavour to do Justice to our Neighbour, & live in mutual amity with all Men, and not carp and startle at the failings of some, but endeavour rather to reclaim them by a spirit of Meekness. *Thirdly*, we must no more place our Religion in particular factions of this or that Name, but rather follow the life & power of Godliness, searching our own Souls and interests with Christ, rather than running after doctrines of little concernment, and serve for no purpose, but to rent the Church of Christ into peices, considering that pure Religion, & undefiled before God and the Father, is this, *To visite the Fatherless and Widows in their Affliction, & to keep himself unspotted of the World.* Which that the Lord may grant is our hearty Prayer and Wish, that so our Hearts may be turned unto him who is able to save, and that he may have the Glory, and we the Comfort, of our happy Repentance. *Amen.*

FINIS.